

HENRY BERGSON: INTELLECTUAL AND SUPRA-INTELLECTUAL INTUITION

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Summary: The article compares Descartes' concept of intellectual intuition and Bergson's concept of supra-intellectual intuition to identify the role of the intellectual component of cognition in the philosophy of duration. Emphasis is put not only on the continuity of philosophical views, as shown in the examples of Descartes' dualism and notion of free will, but also on the difference based on these reference points for Bergson, as creativity and qualitative differences, which suggests a passage to "Philosophy of Life."

Key words: cognition, creativity, dualism, duration, intellectual intuition, Philosophy of Life, qualitative differences.

Анотація: У статті співставляються концепції інтелектуальної інтуїції Декарта і суперінтелектуальної інтуїції Бергсона з метою виявити, яку роль відіграє інтелектуальна складова пізнання в рамках філософії тривалості. Акцент ставиться не тільки на спадкоємності, що показано на прикладах Декартового дуалізму і поняття свободи волі, але також на відмінності, що базується на таких опорних для Бергсона пунктах, як творчість і якісні відмінності, а це дозволяє говорити про перехід до «філософії життя».

Ключові слова: дуалізм, інтелектуальна інтуїція, креативність, пізнання, тривалість, філософія життя, якісні відмінності.

Аннотация: В статье сопоставляются концепции интеллектуальной интуиции Декарта и суперинтеллектуальной интуиции Бергсона с целью выявить, какую роль играет интеллектуальная составляющая познания в рамках философии длительности. Акцент ставится не только на преемственности, что показано на примерах Декартового дуализма и понятия свободы воли, но также на различии, основанном на таких опорных для Бергсона пунктах, как творчество и качественные различия, что позволяет говорить о переходе к «философии жизни».

Ключевые слова: длительность, дуализм, интеллектуальная интуиция, качественные отличия, креативность, познание, философия жизни.

When we talk about Bergson's concept of "intuition", first of all, we must remember that the philosophy of Bergson is a transitional stage from rationalism to the "Philosophy of Life". Bergson relies on the philosophical base which mainly consists of Modern philosophy and classical German philosophy and that allows to trace the main point of contact between Bergson's philosophy and representatives of classical philosophy and highlights criticism of Bergson to the classical philosophy with regard to views on the essence of intuition.

In this connection research of the Cartesian concept of intellectual intuition and its comparison to the Bergson's concept of intuition is of interest.

Descartes' notion of "intuition", which occurs in his essay "Rules for the Direction of the Mind", is not in contradiction with the intellect, as opposed to the concept of Bergson, and vice versa, is an intellectual intuition, "the pure light of reason" [7]. Thanks to this intuition, we arrive at the simple, clear and obvious statements that Descartes considers absolute, that is valid for all, in any case and, apparently, for any time, any era.

For Bergson, an important point of Cartesian's notion of intuition is, above all, the recognition of the validity of intuitive statements for all possible cases. According to Bergson, this position leads to the fact that the whole world will be recognized in advance given, always the same, because the whole system is based on statements that are known not to be changed over time and, therefore, these statements are eternal [3]. And even if these statements affect not all things in the world, not all possible aspects, but just general grounds, and are, thus, certain universal laws, then in fact it means the same thing: all the changes occur only at the level of detail that can be neglected when we talk about the world in general. In any case, it turns out that the changes, and primarily qualitative changes, submit to eternal laws, and are not of consequence, are not essential when it is a question of the truth.

Exactly these consequences are criticized by Bergson, defending a position of fundamental importance of qualitative changes for understanding. The world at large, according to Bergson, evolves, changes its base. But evolution has special value for living organisms since the formation of new trends in the life entails changes in perception, action and cognition. Intellect, separated from instinct in vital development, has gradually isolated and formed into a separate essence with its special qualities – cinematic thinking, the ability to manufacturing and using artificial tools, an opportunity to get a positive result only through the efforts and with the help of mediation, the ability to extend human capabilities beyond basic needs. [4] When it comes to cognition, intelligence competes with instinct (or intuition, derived from instinct), because there is difference in nature between these two vital trends, in other words – a qualitative difference.

Thus, for Bergson, the view of the intelligence is one of the positions, one of the ways of cognition, which can not be reduced to another, an intuitive cognition. The value of qualitative differences, therefore, should not be underestimated. Intelligence ignoring these differences, as it is its nature, is one of the trends, among which there are qualitative differences.

Besides, Bergson distinguishes the cognition of relations as one of the characteristics of intelligence. This means that the matter, "content" of a thing or situation, is inaccessible to intellectual knowledge, but available knowledge for intelligence is knowledge of the forms, the connections between things or phenomena. Therefore, the knowledge being accessible to intelligence, can be expressed in the formula "if ... then ..." as opposed to intuitive knowledge, which comprehends the objects themselves and is expressed in the formula "it is." [5]

If we apply these Bergson's findings to knowledge, which can be obtained through intellectual intuition, it turns out that this knowledge corresponds to the formula of "if ... then ..." A good example is the famous Cartesian *cogito ergo sum*, as this statement shows precisely the link between "thinking" and "exist" rather than, for example, the existential situation, the essence of existence. If the person is not caught himself in thought, question about the existence would have remained opened, and it would have remained opened precisely because it was necessary to seek some other relationship, other components coming into contact with the existence. The statement "*cogito ergo sum*", although it does not contain an

explicit cause-effect relationship is not derived because it is intuitive (that is, “captured” at once, in a flash), however, it expresses a relation between concepts, which is the characteristic of intellectual cognition.

Bergson insists on fundamental distinction between the intellectual and intuitive. He’s not going to dispute the evidence and obviousness of intellectual truths - he sees the incompleteness, omissions of intellectual trend in general. Here, say, he cites the example of dissolving sugar in a glass of water. [1] For intellectual knowledge there is the fact that sugar after a time dissolves in water. If desired, this time can be calculated approximately based on the amount of sugar, water temperature, etc.; also it is possible to calculate how much sugar is remained undissolved at every moment of the time. This calculation would mean that we consider the time not as the duration; it will not be the time in its current, but separate instants (“pictures” in terms of Bergson) that we take apart from each other, and talk about them as if any connection could not be between them. When we directly observe the dissolution of sugar, we have to wait; exactly the feeling of expectation, which connects isolated moments in a continuous stream, is an example of a sense of duration and, consequently, of intuition, as Bergson understands it.

Although Bergson himself in this sense is ambiguous. He focuses primarily on a critique of questions typical for classical philosophy. He seeks to reveal imaginary, illusory, in his view, problems that are put in the context of classical philosophy. But he himself is still in this context. He considers these problems from within, that is – starts from them, trying to find a certain reasoning gap in them through which it would be possible to enter the intuition of duration. Characteristically, that about the duration, about the intuition, he specifically says almost nothing; their definition is mostly negative, that is we know their essence proceeding from what they are not.

That puts Bergson’s philosophy in direct dependence on those doctrines which he criticizes. Therefore, his criticism applies to him too. For example, in “Creative Evolution”, he said that the denial does not hold any additional content compared with the statement, from which it is formed. The criticism of non-existence and disorder ideas is related with it. In fact, the denial means that any given proposition must be replaced by another, but which exactly it is still not known. Moreover – when we make a negative proposition, we focus the attention not on those properties that are directly given to us, but on what is not given, and on the denial, that is – we advert not to a thing, but to the proposition, we consider not a reality, but the opinion about it. At the same time we work exclusively with concepts, in formal logic, because from our sensations we know only that there is, but we cannot know what is not [2]. In the same way, intuition that follows the current of the life, cannot contain that person does not experience directly or had not experienced ever before. Denial, then, is the prerogative of intelligence.

But despite the criticism of denial, Bergson constantly uses it. Any aspect that he touches upon, necessarily involves criticism of the opposite view, and this criticism is not only and not so much a comparison or specification as the reference point, the initial statement, making a start from which it is necessary to come to

different conclusions. And that Bergson himself makes proposition about proposition, instead of about a reality, focuses on the denial, instead of on the doctrine. Besides, he, certainly, uses notions and also logical reasoning for his propositions. And here it is unlikely that so he is trying to convey his thoughts to the reader or to prove the incompleteness of intellectual knowledge by the very same intellectual abilities. He thinks so; because if he followed all his own invention – the philosophy of duration – he would expressed his thoughts only figuratively, in an already artistic creativity, and only partly – concerning philosophy. Bergson, therefore, only plans transition to thinking in duration and to «Philosophy of Life».

On the other hand, the philosophy of Descartes cannot be reduced solely to the mechanism. Although in his view body is a mechanism that acts through the joint work of organs and systems that perform specific functions, human for his reasonableness is still free to choose – he may create a methodology and may not create it, he may follow or not follow the rules of the method. Thus, in mechanism which can only act a strictly certain way, another component is entered, bringing with itself the dualism of body and soul. Soul with its freedom of choice is already creative, since the creation of the methodology is the invention of something new, that describes things, but not in the things themselves and is not a necessary consequence of activity of the body-mechanism. But creatively invented method at the same time focuses on the cognition of mechanism, of causality, of strict dependencies, excluding free choice. The method does not cover “true duration”, even if the universe is recognized as changing: every change will be considered as already become, with allocated phases in it, displaying the action of universal laws, but not as becoming, not as a process inheriting the transition to a different quality.

Bergson, starting with the dualism of the thought and the life (in fact, the Cartesian dualism of the mind and the body), goes to the dualism inherent in the life itself. The life as a thought, that is, the activity of the human soul, is opposed to matter. But the life inheriting the animal and manifesting itself as an effort, is also opposed to the matter, trying to transform it according to its own needs. [6] Thus, the life, as Bergson understands it, is already the third component along with body and soul, and the addition of this component changes the whole structure of the Cartesian dualism. The life as an effort, “impulse”, now is opposed to the matter as to the determined mechanism. Dualism of the life manifests itself in the duality of its countervailing trends – instinct and intellect; as the man has both tendencies, he is dual now in his mind: he may follow the natural tendency of the intellect or the intuition of duration, which is immanent to a “vital impulse.”

Interprising the life as becoming creativity, Bergson, thus, continues the Cartesian idea of free will, expanding its field to the life in general. That's why Bergson is a follower of Descartes. But the expansion of freedom field changes representation about the world as a whole, about a man and about intuition. Therefore, Bergson's “intuition,” in his own terms, is different “by nature” from Cartesian “intuition.” Introduction of the duration and distinctions by nature,

inaccessible to intellectual knowledge, allows Bergson to talk about intuition that goes beyond the limits of intelligence, that is, about supra-intellectual intuition.

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